

How do we decide if someone is interested or disinterested? How do we decide if someone is friendly or unfriendly? Learn how to observe and interpret different levels of interest and friendliness.

# The Friendliness Quadrant & Spectrum

Social Thinking Thinksheets

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## TEACHING GUIDE

1. We need to help students observe levels of friendliness and unfriendliness. We want to help students interpret whether someone is interested, disinterested or dislikes someone and to what extent.
  - Friendly – unfriendly
  - The Friendliness Quadrant – four discrete parts, for students beginning to scale (see below)
  - The Friendliness Spectrum – a continuum, for students who can grade their observations further (see below)
  - Start with discussing polar opposites like friendly and unfriendly. Then using the friendliness quadrant or spectrum, break it down to more nuanced observations. Compare how much more or less friendly a person seems, to help students scale levels of ‘friendliness’.
  - Where you start will depend on how well the student observes and interprets: what they see, hear and know (prior impressions of people based on what we know of their background or what we recall of our experience of them i.e. social memory).
  
2. Teach student(s) to observe the following:
  - The way a person acts towards you
  - The way a person looks at you
  - The way a person talks to you
  - The way a person is towards others
  - Use the 4 steps of communication to teach them to tune in to BRAIN, BODY, FACE/ EYES and WORDS
  - Teach students to observe the other people around and the context. The way someone is towards you can vary depending on who is around and what is happening e.g. a student may sit further away and stop chatting to you, once the teacher enters the room.
  - Teach students to connect to what they know of the person and remember from their social memory. It may not be something that just happened, but a collection of things that happened over time. May not be something a person did or said directly to the student, but what the student perceives of them based on the person’s interactions with others i.e. impressions.
  - Allow students to come up with their own definitions, examples and elaborations, through collaborative exploration. We do not just want to provide them a scale. We want to develop their ability to scale and make meaning of their experiences.

3. Suggestions on how to uncover, discover and explore 'friendliness' and levels of interest
- Observe and describe their natural attributes or physical presence that presents as friendly or approachable. What about them makes others feel comfortable? Speak to their strengths to validate and motivate.
  - Videos and photos help students observe themselves and each other more closely. Help them observe each other within a group.
  - Use role play and self to demonstrate. Explore what friendly, too friendly, disinterested or unfriendly looks like in standing, sitting and while moving.
  - Use characters in a book or show meaningful to the student. Who appears relatively less or more friendly and why? Describe what they see or hear. Examples of shows: Seven dwarfs, Asterix, Brooklyn 99- where you can compare and contrast a range of characters across the spectrum of friendliness.
  - Use CGI cartoons with big animated eyes, that you can pause and process. These are short clips with lots of emotional content and plots, that relate to a wide age range from preschool to teens/ youths. Helps that there is little or no language in these clips. Many of our students tune into the words, but we want them to tune into the nonverbal hidden intentions.
  - May consider animal videos for those who like animals. But you don't get as much on the eyes and facial expressions.
  - Use sitcoms familiar to the child. Shows like Brooklyn 99, with a good range of characters and more exaggerated cues, can be helpful to start with.
  - Help them observe specific persons at home and then at school, interacting with others. Examples, mum with her friend (she meets or speaks to often) vs a neighbor vs a shop assistant at the supermarket she usually visits. Help them describe what they see, hear and know, and scale the level of friendliness/ interest.
  - Extend the teaching: Describe how this looks or sounds like online or in social media interactions (including texting and emails).

## THE FRIENDLINESS QUADRANT

**FRIENDLY:** *Enough interest that keeps you feeling safe and comfortable. Respects physical and emotional boundaries. You want to 'stay' or return.*

Approaches with body, shoulders facing you

- Smiles and looks at you
- Warm or energetic tone
- Shares about them or asks about you
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**DISINTERESTED:** *Does not appear interested. May 'seem' indifferent, neutral or distant. May be more 'formal' in the way they act or speak to you.*

- Neither moves towards or away from you
- Focuses more on other things. May seem distracted.
- Tone sounds neutral or indifferent
- Slow to respond and may not have much to say or ask
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**TOO FRIENDLY:** *Overly interested and takes it too far, too fast. Too nice, clingy, pushy or trying too hard, resulting in you feeling very uncomfortable. Note: Person may transition to 'unfriendly' when feeling denied.*

- Moves or sits too close
- Smiles, looks or laughs too much
- Overly helpful or too eager
- Shares too much about them or asks too much about you
- Stalks people (either in-person or online)
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**UNFRIENDLY:** *Dislikes and/ or actively excludes you, resulting in you feeling very uncomfortable. May be unapproachable or avoidant. May display anti-social behaviors toward you including insulting or acting mean.*

- Turns body away, walks away or avoids you
- Intentionally puts their bag on chair you go to sit on
- Ignores you or doesn't respond to you
- Talks bad about others, gossips or spreads rumors
- Mocks or puts people down
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# THE FRIENDLINESS SPECTRUM

\*The spectrum is based on how much 'friendly behaviour' is exhibited, with it decreasing from left to right. Pick 3 persons to describe across the spectrum of 'too much, too little and just right', depending on how comfortable or uncomfortable they make you feel. List your observations.

Inappropriate      Too friendly      Friendly      Disinterested      Unfriendly      Unapproachable



TOO MUCH

JUST RIGHT

TOO LITTL